



## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP21-57-000]

#### **Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline Amendment Project**

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for the Mountain Valley Pipeline Amendment Project (Amendment Project), proposed by Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC (Mountain Valley) in the above-referenced docket. Mountain Valley requests authorization to change the crossing method of specific waterbodies and wetlands from open-cut dry crossings (as authorized by its October 13, 2017 Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity [Certificate]) to trenchless methods (conventional bore, guided conventional bore, or Direct Pipe®<sup>1</sup>). In addition, Mountain Valley requests authorization for two minor route adjustments to avoid wetlands and waterbodies and authorization to conduct nighttime construction at eight trenchless crossings.

The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the Amendment Project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FERC staff concludes that approval of the proposed project, with appropriate mitigating measures, would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Direct Pipe® is a construction method developed by Herrenknecht AG that combines microtunneling and horizontal direction drill (HDD).

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is a federal cooperating agency who assisted us in preparing this EA because they have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to impacts to waters of the U.S. The COE may adopt the EA per 40 CFR 1501.8 if, after an independent review of the document, it concludes that their requirements and/or regulatory responsibilities have been satisfied. However, the COE would present its own conclusions and recommendations in its respective and applicable records of decision or determinations. Otherwise, it may elect to conduct its own supplemental environmental analyses.

The proposed Amendment Project includes the following:

- 120 trenchless crossings (117 conventional bores, 2 guided conventional bores, and 1 Direct Pipe®) of 47 wetlands and 136 streams in Wetzel, Lewis, Webster, Nicholas, Greenbrier, Summers, and Monroe counties, West Virginia and Giles, Montgomery, Roanoke, Franklin, and Pittsylvania, counties, Virginia;
- avoidance of one wetland via a shift in the permanent operational right-of-way at MP 0.70;
- avoidance of one waterbody due to a route adjustment at MP 230.8; and
- 24-hour construction activities at the previously authorized Gauley River and Roanoke River, two guided conventional bore crossings, the Direct Pipe® crossing, and three conventional bore locations.

The Commission mailed a copy of the *Notice of Availability* to federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; potentially affected landowners and other interested individuals and groups; and newspapers and libraries in the project area. The

EA is only available in electronic format. It may be viewed and downloaded from the FERC's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)), on the natural gas environmental documents page (<https://www.ferc.gov/industries-data/natural-gas/environment/environmental-documents>). In addition, the EA may be accessed by using the eLibrary link on the FERC's website. Click on the eLibrary link (<https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/search>), select "General Search" and enter the docket number in the "Docket Number" field, (i.e. CP21-57). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659.

The EA is not a decision document. It presents Commission staff's independent analysis of the environmental issues for the Commission to consider when addressing the merits of all issues in this proceeding. Any person wishing to comment on the EA may do so. Your comments should focus on the EA's disclosure and discussion of potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that the Commission has the opportunity to consider your comments prior to making its decision on this project, it is important that we receive your comments in Washington, DC on or before 5:00pm Eastern Time on **September 13, 2021**.

For your convenience, there are three methods you can use to file your comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has staff available to assist you at (866) 208-3676 or [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov). Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- (1) You can file your comments electronically using the eComment feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to FERC Online. This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- (2) You can also file your comments electronically using the eFiling feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to FERC Online. With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on "eRegister." You must select the type of filing you are making. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select "Comment on a Filing"; or
- (3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the Commission. Be sure to reference the project docket number (CP21-57-000) on your letter. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Filing environmental comments will not give you intervenor status, but you do not need intervenor status to have your comments considered. Only intervenors have the right to seek rehearing or judicial review of the Commission's decision. At this point in this proceeding, the timeframe for filing timely intervention requests has expired. Any person seeking to become a party to the proceeding must file a motion to intervene out-

of-time pursuant to Rule 214(b)(3) and (d) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR 385.214(b)(3) and (d)) and show good cause why the time limitation should be waived. Motions to intervene are more fully described at <https://www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/ferc-online/how-guides>.

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) using the eLibrary link. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of all formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to <https://www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/overview> to register for eSubscription.

Dated: August 13, 2021.

**Kimberly D. Bose,**

*Secretary.*

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